LANSDALE, PA

## Work to begin soon on homestead office

As soon as the holidays are over, work will begin on the new Jenkins assessor's office, the latest restoration project planned for the homestead.

The second floor room that once served as the society's office will be completely renovated to resemble what it might have looked like when John Jenkins served as tax assessor for Gwvnedd Township in the late 1700s.

The project will involve removing the bookshelves originally built to hold bound newspaper volumes and a closest that was added during the years when the homestead was used as an apartment house.

Once the room is cleared, it will be rewired, new adjustable shelving faced with Colonial-era trim - will be installed, the floors will be refinished and the walls will receive a fresh coat of paint. The centerpiece will be a

large desk befitting a tax assessor.

At the same time, the floors in the hallway and children's room will also be refinished.

The society will be participating in a number of special events during the com-



**NEW OFFICE:** This room in the Jenkins Homestead will be renovated into John Jenkins' assessor's office beginning in January.

ing year. Among them are the second Lansdale Founders Day in August and the Montgomery County history Fair planned for September at Trappe. Planning is also under way for the society's second Spring Tea.

#### Donations is mayor's name will fund several projects

The society was one of several nonprofit organizations earmarked for donations in the name of the late Mayor Mike DiNunzio.

To date more than \$1,700 has been received. The donations will be used to fund several needs in the coming months. The first of these is a new headset microphone to be used at our Community Programs.

We thank all of you who contributed in Mike's name.

# Jenkins Journal

LANSDALE, PA

# See some of Mike's favorite things

Dec. 3 open house features the late mayor's collectibles

The late Mayor Mike DiNunzio was known throughout the North Penn region for his bright-as-sunshine smile, firm handshake and an unabashed commitment to family, friends and his beloved Lansdale.

Another aspect of Mike's life was not often seen in public: He was a life-long collector of anything that tickled his fancy.

As part of the borough's annual holiday celebration, the Lansdale Historical Society will open the doors of the Jenkins Homestead and Research Center for an extensive display of the collectibles Mike gathered over the years. The open house will be held Saturday, Dec. 3, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. As usual, there will be no admission charge but all donations will help us preserve Lansdale's historic past.

Many of us have seen some of the mayor's antique car collection, including his green MG, the powder blue 1965 Mustang, his police paddy wagon







#### Lansdale Historical Society 137 Jenkins Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446



The Jenkins Historic Comple

## The Lansdale Historical Society

DECEMBER, 2011

Mike DiNunzio Jr. and wife Mary Beth in the mayor's private museum.

and scaled down fire truck, which were often featured in local parades. But for this event we'll focus on the many other items Mike amassed in his private "museum". His eclectic interests included hammers, railroad



lanterns, license plates, scale model cars and trucks, toys, antique clocks, old shoemaker's tools (of course), and so much more we couldn't list it all here.

One of his favorite possessions was, of all things, a James Brown singing doll. Turn it on and the Godfather of Soul sings "I Feel Good!"

Weather permitting, we may have some surprises to display on the Jenkins Complex patio. The other items will be placed throughout the homestead and research center with family members and friends on hand to share memories of the mayor.

## Then and Now Part V is January show

The society's Community Program series will resume Tuesday, Jan 10 with our fifth edition of *Then You Saw It, No You Don't*, an annual retrospective of how the North Penn region has changed over the past century.

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Vice President Steve Moyer will present an all-new collection of vintage photographs matched up with current views of the same locations in most cases captured from the same angle.

In some instances the scenes have changed considerably; in others, it appears that time stood still.

More than 600 images were included in the first four edi-



THE JENKINS HOMESTEAD

Jenkins Homestead and Historical **Research** Center

•137 Jenkins Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446.

•Hours: Wednesdays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursdays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon.

•Telephone: (215) 855-1872; (215) 393-8919 (fax).

•E-mail: info@ lansdalehistory.org •Please send mail correspondence to 137 Jenkins Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446.

•Website: www.lansdalehistory.org.

tions of this popular show. As the result of new additions to our vintage photo collection, we have been able to assemble an all-new program each year since 2007. We invite members and friends to continue donat-

ing old photos so we can continue this series in the future. As usual, the program will be held at the Lansdale Parks and Recreation Building beginning at 7:30 p.m. There is no admission charge but dona-

tions are appreciated. In the event of inclement weather, an announcement will be made on WNPV 1440 Radio. Community Programs for February and March will be announced in the January.



LONG BEFORE Wendy's cooked its first hamburger, Lansdale Memorial Works was a stone's throw from the Lansdale Cemetery.

### **Committee's duties expanded to include** study of succession, board responsibilities

A Nominating Committee has been appointed by society President Dick Shearer to formulate a slate of officers and board members for our annual election in February.

The committee consists of Second Vice President Steve Moyer, Treasurer Anne Scheuring, and Trustees Linda Evans and Clarence Kinsey. The latter is serving as interim chairman of the group.

The committee was appointed with a dual purpose:

(1) To formulate a slate of candidates for the February election. Unlike recent years, there will be at least two changes on the 2012 board: One officer has asked to step back to trustee status and another has decided not to seek re-election.

As the result of this, the committee is recommending a change in bylaws to combine the offices of Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary, thus creating an additional trustee slot. The Corresponding Sec-

retary position, which has become largely ceremonial, would be eliminated.

A bylaws change will require a vote of the membership present at our Tuesday, Jan. 10 Community Program. A motion will made to that effect immediately before the show at 7:30 p.m.

(2) During the coming year, the committee will review the duties and responsibilities of the officers and trustees and how some of the workload presently handled by the president/ administrator can be distributed to others. The ultimate goal is to set the stage for a smooth transition to a new president.

Shearer has served as president/ administrator for the past 10 years and has agreed to serve again in 2012, if elected. But he has indicated that at some time in the future wants to relinquish the presidency to concentrate on historical research and writing.

We will report on the committee's progress throughout the year in the Jenkins Journal.

# **2012** membership drive under way

#### **By DICK SHEARER**

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Yes, it's that time again. In just a few weeks we'll bid goodbye to 2011 and usher in 2012.

That means the start of a new calendar year for our society as we delve into a new series of challenges and finish off several projects that have lingered because of the current financial downturn that the so-called pundits will change course sometime soon.

Thanks to careful budgeting and conservative spending Lansdale Historical Society is holding its own, perhaps somewhat better than many other historical societies. For this, thanks must go to our loyal members who continue to support our mission through their dues, donations at our Community Programs and special financial gifts as each year winds down.

And we cannot overestimate the importance of our long-standing alliance with the Borough of Lansdale, which allows us to occupy its buildings, assists with maintenance costs and provides an

annual donation that is used to underwrite a part-time administrator. In 2012, the board of directors is committed to tying up loose ends on a number of projects. Most important among them is converting the society's former headquarters in the Jenkins Homestead into a tax assessor's office (more on that in another story). We have been making steady pro-

gress in two other areas:

future generations to enjoy.

Lansdale Historical Socie	ety Membership Application	Year
Name:		
Address:		
Town:	StateZIP	
Phone:	E-Mail:	
	<u>PLEASE CHECK</u>	
INDIVIDUAL: S	Single \$20 Couple \$25Patron \$40	)
s	Sustaining \$55 Business \$100	
LIF	ETIME: 55 or older (Single) \$300 (Coupl	le) \$500)
<b>Additional Donation</b>	\$ Don't Mail I	Newsletter

--Our two-year-old effort to convert our newspaper collection to digital media has been moving ahead at a steady pace thanks to the efforts of Don Groff, Ray Walton, Frank Krimm and Clarence Kinsey.

This is slow, tedious work that will take years to complete but to date the results have been promising. Each passing week means that more vintage newspapers have been preserved for

--After many months of frustration, we are finally beginning to move our records into the Past Perfect archival system. Solving the mystery of this computer software package has been quite a challenge, but thanks to Larry O'Malley, there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

As these projects move forward, we'll start work on several other initiatives during 2012 that are outlined elsewhere in this newsletter.

To continue to grow, your continued support is essential. With grant money increasingly difficult to obtain, we must depend on you – our members and friends – to come through once again.

Last year we reluctantly imposed a dues increase. This year we will hold the line, which means we continue to be one of the most affordable investments you can make to preserve local history for future generations. Our single person rate of \$20 is a real bargain; re-upping at the Patron or Sustaining Member level allows us to do so much more and we encourage you to consider those options.

On behalf of our board of directors, I wish you the best of holidays and hope that we can count on you again.